


NAEPP Coordinating Committee

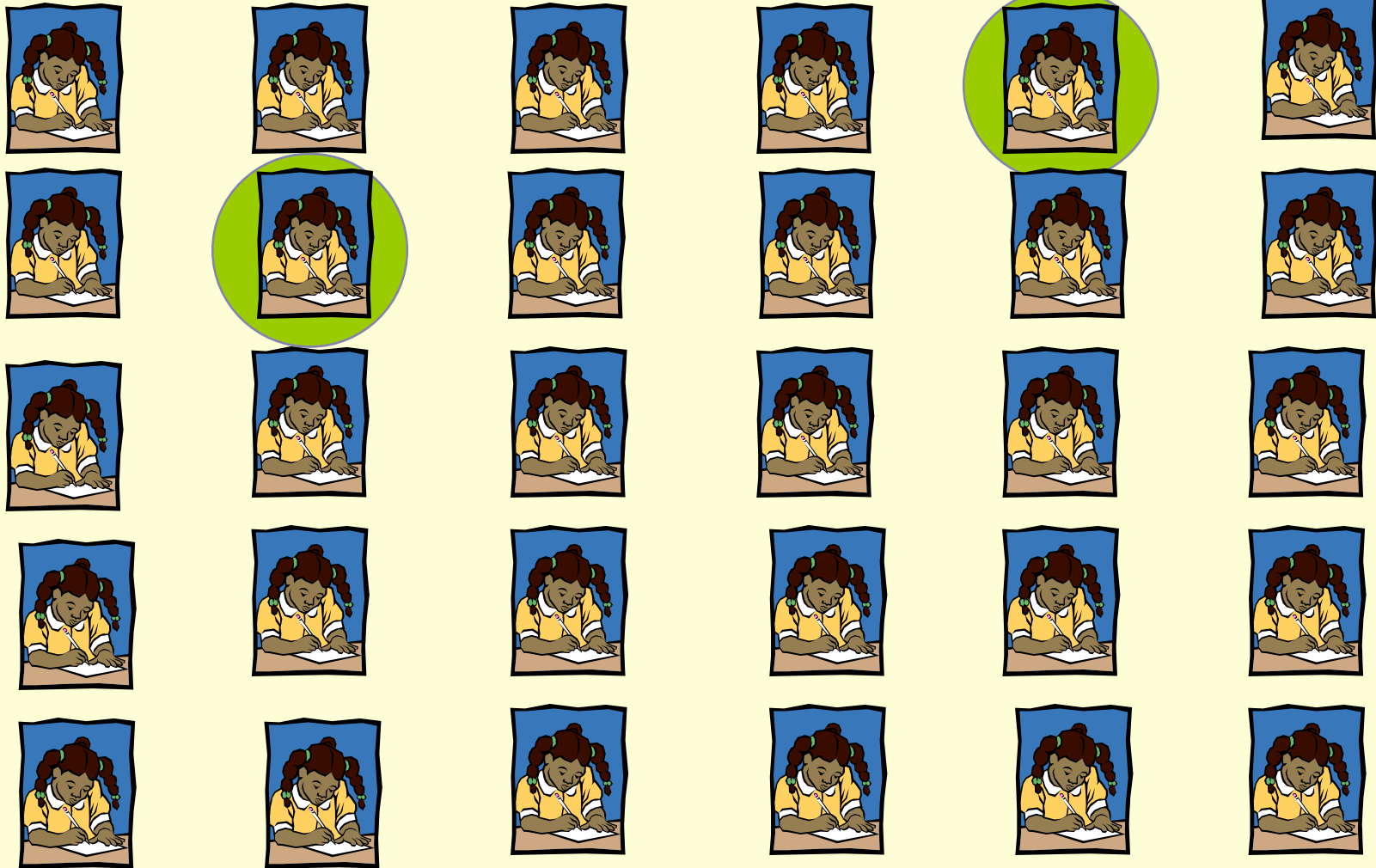
School Asthma Education Slide Set



Asthma is a Major Public Health Problem

- Nearly 5 million children have asthma (6.9% of children under 18)
 - It is one of the most common chronic childhood illnesses
 - It is a leading cause of school absences
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In a classroom of 30 children,



2 or more children are likely to have asthma

What is Asthma?

A disease that:

- Is chronic
- Produces recurring episodes of breathing problems
 - Coughing
 - Wheezing
 - Chest tightness
 - Shortness of breath
- Cannot be cured, but can be controlled

What are the Symptoms of Asthma?

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Tightness in the chest
- Coughing at night or after physical activity; cough that lasts more than a week
- Waking at night with asthma symptoms (a key marker of uncontrolled asthma)

What Happens During an Episode of Asthma?

- The lining of the airways becomes swollen (inflamed)
- The airways produce a thick mucus
- The muscles around the airways tighten and make airways narrower

What Makes Asthma Worse?


Allergens

- Warm-blooded pets (including dogs, cats, birds, and small rodents)
- House dust mites
- Cockroaches
- Pollens from grass and trees
- Molds (indoors and outdoors)




What Makes Asthma Worse? (cont.)

Irritants

- Cigarette smoke and wood smoke
 - Scented products such as hair spray, cosmetics, and cleaning products
 - Strong odors from fresh paint or cooking
 - Automobile fumes and air pollution
 - Chemicals such as pesticides and lawn treatments
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What Makes Asthma Worse? (cont.)

- Infections in the upper airways, such as colds (a common trigger for both children and adults)
 - Exercise
 - Strong expressions of feelings (crying, laughing)
 - Changes in weather and temperature
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Is There A Cure For Asthma?

Asthma cannot be cured,
but it can be controlled.
You should expect nothing less.





How Is Asthma Controlled?


- Follow an individualized asthma management plan
 - Avoid or control exposure to things that make asthma worse
 - Use medication appropriately
 - Long-term-control medicine
 - Quick-relief medicine
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How Is Asthma Controlled? (cont.)

- Monitor response to treatment
 - Symptoms
 - Peak flow
- Get regular follow-up care



How are Asthma Episodes Controlled?

- Know the signs that asthma is worsening
 - Treat symptoms or drop in peak flow at first signs of worsening
 - Monitor response to therapy
 - Seek a doctor's help when it is needed
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What Should People with Asthma Be Able To Do?

- Be active without having asthma symptoms; this includes participating in exercise and sports
 - Sleep through the night without having asthma symptoms
 - Prevent asthma episodes (attacks)
 - Have the best possible lung function (e.g., good peak flow number)
 - Avoid side effects from asthma medicines
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